

# Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

## **Forty-second Assembly District**

*proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks*



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### **Koretz Joins 50 Other Legislators in Opposing War in Iraq** *Signs Letter Requesting President Bush Take More Time and Not Act Unilaterally*

(Sacramento) – Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) joined 50 other California state legislators today in announcing their opposition to the United States attacking Iraq. Dozens of State Assemblymembers and State Senators signed a letter to President Bush urging him to await a final decision on waging war on Iraq until the United Nations Security Council votes and Congress acts in accordance with the U.S. Constitution. The announcement was made in Capitol Park at the new All Wars Memorial, where Mr. Koretz gave the following statement:

“I don’t always agree with the Vatican. But their representative said that a unilateral war against Iraq -- unauthorized by the United Nations -- would be a ‘crime against peace’, and I have to agree. We all know that Saddam Hussein is an evil man who would love to take over the Middle East. But he hasn’t because he can’t. There is nothing that makes attacking Iraq a logical act. It is not clear that Iraq is one of the nations most supportive of terrorism or that it has one of the most threatening weapons programs. If we were going to attack countries based on those criteria, Iraq would be down on the list, probably behind North Korea, Iran and others.

“I believe this war is purely for Mr. Bush’s political advantage. His popularity was low before he attacked Afghanistan, and high after. He and his advisors realize this is the only thing he can do well. It has been clear from the beginning that the Bush Administration will not take ‘yes’ for an answer from Iraq and wants to attack no matter what.

“The loss of American lives, both from the fighting and from anticipated terrorism at home, is not worth it. The loss of Israeli lives when Iraq and local terrorists attack Israel is not worth it. The damage to the U.S. economy is not worth it. The environmental damage when Iraq sets their oil wells on fire is not worth it. The potential for enormous harm makes this a war we should enter only as a very last resort. We are not at that point and we should not go to war.”

The legislators’ letter to the President points out the “lack of credible evidence,” the “failure to persuade other nations to support our intentions,” the “lack of clarity about possible instability in the Middle East during the war,” the possibility that a war will “exacerbate the national recession” and California’s fiscal crisis. The letter also reminded President Bush about the United States’ failures in Vietnam and the “irreparable social and cultural divisions” that conflict caused.

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